

**CITY OF AUSTIN
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION
VENDOR NAME: CREATIVE CONSUMER RESEARCH, INC.**

#3a
AGENDA DATE: 12/17/2015

SUBJECT: Authorize negotiation and execution of a 12-month contract with **CREATIVE CONSUMER RESEARCH INC.**, or another qualified offeror to Request for Proposals RMJ0302, for marketing research service studies, in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 with four 12-month extension options in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 per extension option, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$1,500,000.

AMOUNT & SOURCE OF FUNDING: Funding in the amount of \$225,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Operating Budget of Austin Energy. Funding for the remaining three months of the original contract period and extension options is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

FISCAL NOTE: There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

PURCHASING: Best evaluated proposal.

BOARD AND COMMISSION ACTION: November 16, 2015 - To be reviewed by the Electric Utility Commission. November 17, 2015 – To be reviewed by the Resource Management Commission.

MBE/WBE: This contract will be awarded in compliance with Chapter 2-9C of the City Code (Minority-Owned and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program). No subcontracting opportunities were identified; therefore, no goals were established for this solicitation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Ray Moncada, Senior Buyer Specialist Corporate /512-322-6594

This contract is for marketing research study services for Austin Energy. The work provided through this contract will provide Austin Energy with a marketing research firm to conduct quantitative and qualitative customer service-related studies of its customers' needs, concerns, and opinions. The studies include the full range of data collection techniques such as telephone interviews, surveys, focus groups, and personal interviews.

Services will include monitoring attitudes and perceptions of residential and commercial customers regarding Austin Energy's service, and provide insight on the programs and services these customers value. Austin Energy will utilize results from the studies to assist in making sound business and marketing decisions. These ongoing studies will provide trend data to analyze the impact of program and service offerings and related events on the attitudes and opinions of customers.

This is a critical function as it assists several work groups to monitor customer satisfaction scores in relation to International Organization for Standardization (ISO) compliance. The market research also supports direction to staff included in Council Resolution 20140828-158 to conduct a statistically valid survey for customers participating in energy efficiency programs, including the low income weatherization program, to measure customer satisfaction. Finally, it assists the utility as a whole in tracking overall customer satisfaction and related antecedents.

An Austin Energy evaluation team with expertise in this area evaluated the proposals and rated this proposal as the best to provide these services. Evaluation criteria used to evaluate the proposals include solution, experience and personnel, project management structure, price, and local business presence.

This request allows for the development of an agreement with a qualified offeror selected by Council. If the City is unsuccessful in negotiating a satisfactory agreement with the selected offeror, negotiations will cease and staff will return to Council so that another qualified offeror may be selected.

The current contract expires on December 28, 2015. Approval is requested in order to ensure an efficient transition to the new contract with no lapse in services.

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MBE/WBE solicited: 29/31

MBE/WBE bid: 0/0

PRICE ANALYSIS

- a. Adequate competition.
- b. 559 notices were sent, including 29 MBEs and 31 WBEs. Nine proposals were received, with no response from the MBEs/WBEs. Multiple notices may be sent to the same vendor, e.g. one vendor may have multiple email addresses/fax numbers.

APPROVAL JUSTIFICATION

- a. Best evaluated proposal.
- b. The Purchasing Office recommends contract award consistent with the evaluation committee.
- c. Advertised on the Internet.

DRAFT

Marketing Research Service Studies for Austin Energy – RFP RMJ0302

Evaluation Category	Maximum Points	Creative Consumer Research	Galloway Research Service Inc.	MDC Research	Market Decisions Research	Dieringer Research Group Inc.	Probit Research Inc.	Great Blue Research Inc.	MSR Group	BlackStone Group
Project Management Structure	10	9.25	6.50	7.00	8.50	9.25	6.50	5.00	6.75	8.00
Solution	30	27.75	24.00	25.00	23.00	23.00	18.50	17.00	20.00	19.50
Experience and Personnel	30	27.75	24.00	23.00	22.25	21.50	18.75	17.00	21.25	19.50
Price	20	16.77	17.87	15.83	10.29	8.73	6.24	20.00	9.94	8.93
Local Business Presence	10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	100	81.52	72.37	70.83	64.04	62.48	59.99	59.00	57.94	55.93

NOTE: As per Section 252.049 of the local government code, contents of a proposal shall remain confidential until a contract is awarded or as directed by the Texas Attorney General's Office. Therefore, the matrix will include points awarded for price but exact pricing will not be disclosed.